

Message Text

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SUBJ: GOVERNMENT FORMATION - NO. 3 - FALL OF
HARTLING GOVERNMENT PRODUCES NEW ROUND OF
FORMATION TALKS

REF: COPENHAGEN 0248

SUMMARY: THE FALL OF THE HARTLING GOVERNMENT OPENED THE
WAY FOR A NEW ROUND OF GOVERNMENT FORMATION TALKS, WITH
FOLKETING PRESIDENT KARL SKYTTE THE MOST PROBABLY CANDIDATE
AS FORMATEUR. AS THE PARTY PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR
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OVERTHROWING HARTLING, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE LIEKLY

TO FORM THE CORE OF THE SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT IN SOME FORM OF COOPERATION WITH THE RADICALS. END SUMMARY.

1. FORMATEUR CANDIDATES. FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION OF THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT THIS MORNING (JAN 29), THE QUEEN IS CONSULTING PARTY LEADERS REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT FORMATEUR, WHO, IN DANISH PRACTICE MAY NOT NECESSARILY BE CANDIDATE FOR PRIMIN. PRIME MINISTER HARTLING COULD CONCEIVABLY MUSTER PLURALITY SUPPORT, BUT HAVING JUST BEEN DEFEATED WOULD PROBABLY NOT ACCEPT THE ROLE. THE MOST LIKELY ALTERNATIVE APPEARS TO BE KARL SKYTTE, THE HIGHLY RESPECTED PRESIDENT OF THE FOLKETING, WHO REPORTEDLY HAS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC BACKING. AS A RADICAL PARTY MEMBER, SKYTTE MIGHT WELL ALSO BE SUPPORTED BY MOST OF THE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES AS A TACTICAL MOVE TO PREVENT THE INITIATIVE FROM PASSING TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, AT LEAST, IN THE FIRST ROUND.

2. THUS THE NEGOTIATIONS TO FIND A SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT PROMISE TO BE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT. THOUGH THERE EXISTS A GENERAL FEELING IN THE COUNTRY THAT AN EARLY RESOLUTION IS NECESSARY, IT MAY TAKE TWO WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE THE NEXT GOVERNMENT EMERGES.

3. PROBABLE SHAPE OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY WILL MOST LIKELY BE THE CORE OF WHATEVER SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT DOES EMERGE, SINCE A COALITION INCLUDING THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND LIBERALS IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. WHETHER THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF OTHER PARTIES, EITHER FORMALLY IN A COALITION OR INFORMALLY AS SUPPORT PARTIES, IS UNCLEAR AS YET; IF NOT, THE SDP IS PREAPRED TO FORM A SINGLE-PARTY MINORITY GOVERNMENT.

4. THE PARTIES OF THE FAR LEFT FAVOR THE LATTER SINCE THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WOULD THEN BE MORE SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION FROM THEIR SIDE. AS INDICATED IN PREVIOUS EMBASSY REPORTS, HOWEVER, THE RADICAL PARTY IS IN THE KEY POSITION. IT HAS GAMBLLED THAT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, RADICALS AND SOME PARTIES OF THE LIBERAL CENTER IS

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POSSIBLE. THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLES PARTY AND CENTER DEMOCRATS COULD PERHAPS BE BROUGHT AROUND TO SUPPORT SOME FORM OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-RADICAL COALITION GOVERNMENT.

5. WHATEVER FORM OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-LED GOVERNMENT RESULTS FROM THE COMING TALKS, IT PROBABLY WILL BE MORE MODERATE THAN THE ANKER JORGENSEN GOVERNMENT OF 1973-74,

IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN ITS WEAK PARLIAMENTARY POSITION. MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, BY THE TERMS OF ITS OWN "NO CONFIDENCE" MOTION, COMMITTED ITSELF TO AN ORIENTATION TOWARD THE CENTER, ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. (THIS PART OF THEIR MOTION WAS A DEMAND OF THE RADICAL PARTY.) THAT FACT SUGGESTS THE POSSIBILITY OF A RETURN TO THE TRADITIONAL SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-RADICAL COOPERATION WHICH WAS CHARACTERISTIC OF DANISH POLITICS PRIOR TO 1966. IT WOULD IMPLY, AT LEAST FOR THE SHORT RUN, A LESS "SOCIALISTIC" EMPHASIS IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY POLICY.

6. A BENCHMARK OF THE MORE MODERATE LINE OF SUCH A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-LED GOVERNMENT WILL BE ITS STAND ON "ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY." THE CONSERVATIVES AND THE CENTER DEMOCRATS HAVE ALREADY EXPLICITLY WARNED THAT ANY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-LED GOVERNMENT MUST DROP ALL THOUGHT OF INTRODUCING ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY IF IT HOPES FOR THEIR TACIT SUPPORT OR TOLERATION.

7. IN SUM, IF A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC-LED GOVERNMENT EMERGES, AS SEEMS PROBABLE IN SOME FORM OR OTHER, IT IS APT TO BE ONE WITH WHICH WE CAN LIVE MORE COMFORTABLY THAN WITH THE PREVIOUS SDP GOVT, EVEN IF ANKER JORGENSEN AGAIN BECOMES PRIME MINISTER.
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